

Strategy: Community Based Professional Development for Early Care and Education Professionals**Strategy Description**

Improves the professional skills of those providing care and education to children 5 and younger.

Strategy Narrative

The foundation of the Navajo/Apache Regional Partnership Council's strategic plan is to support, and provide, access to professional development opportunities to the regions' existing early care and education programs and professionals. Over the course of the Regional Council's experience, many early care and education programs have closed; many as a result of a lack of focus on the business of early care and education, others as a result of the economic recession and the accompanying significant reduction in enrolled children. The early care and education programs operating in the region are a vital asset to our regions' parents, and the Regional Council believes strongly in supporting our existing programs to improve their quality and to solidify their business plans and models to support long-term sustainability.

Over the course of the past five years, the Regional Council has extensively explored the needs of our early care and education community, the assets available within the Navajo/Apache Region, and the logistics of developing and implementing a Learning Lab within the Region. The information gathered has identified a regional need to provide local mentoring and coaching to our existing early care and education programs to address the following:

- **Develop and implement strong business plans that will lead toward vital, sustainable programs**
- **Improve the quality of existing early care and education programs serving children aged birth through age 5**
- **Support overall professionalization of the early care and education system**

This strategy is envisioned to reach a cohort of program owners and/or directors who are not already participating and enrolled in Quality First through community-based professional development opportunities designed to address the individual needs of our regions' existing early care and education programs. Participating programs will be encouraged to apply for Quality First, and to avail themselves of all available regional and statewide funded First Things First programs and strategies. Participating programs will be encouraged to apply for Quality First. Participating owners and/or directors will be supported in pursuing their own college level degrees, and in supporting their staff to attain CDA, AA and BA degrees by utilizing the Navajo/Apache Regionally funded strategies of Professional Career Pathways, Recruitment into the Field, and if interest warrants, regionally funded TEACH Scholarships.

It is envisioned that this strategy will serve as a foundational support for early care and education programs to prepare them for successful participation in Quality First should they be selected, and to be successfully rated as a 3 Star program with the Quality First Rating system.

Target Population Description

This strategy will work to improve the quality of existing early care and education programs in the Navajo/Apache Region. The target population is early care and education program owners, directors, or managers who are not participating and enrolled in Quality First.

Target Service Units**FY 13****FY 14****FY 15**

Number of participating professionals served	??	??	??
Funding Level	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16
Community Based Professional Development for Early Care and Education Professionals	\$125,000	\$250,000	\$250,000

DRAFT